

UNITED STATES SENATOR
SUSAN COLLINS

SEVEN-POINT PLAN FOR MAINE JOBS



SENATOR COLLINS' PLAN FOR MAINE JOBS



Mainers are resilient. Along with the rest of the country, however, we are currently suffering through the weakest economic recovery since the Second World War. Too many Mainers have lost their jobs through no fault of their own and continue to struggle to find jobs in this tough economy.

Putting people back to work is the key to Maine's economic recovery and my number one goal. Together we need to create and foster an environment that leads to job creation and growth. Attached you will find the "Senator Collins' Seven-Point Plan to Create Jobs and Help Small Businesses Grow."

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TRAINING A 21ST CENTURY MAINE WORKFORCE

Maine's greatest asset is its people. Ensuring that Maine workers get the education and training they need to compete in the 21st Century must be a top priority.

Robust Workforce Development.

Despite our nation's unemployment rate remaining unacceptably high, job openings in high-growth industries like healthcare, clean energy, biosciences, and the manufacturing sector remain unfilled. To reverse this trend, I introduced the "Strengthening Employment Clusters to Organize Regional Success (SECTORS) Act" with Senator Brown (D-OH). By providing competitive grants for partnerships that include institutions of higher education, employers, labor, and workforce boards, this legislation aims to foster an environment that builds customized solutions for specific industries. The SECTORS Act will help align America's workforce with the needs of our nation's employers to promote a robust and growing economy.

Restoring Accountability and Stability to Job Corps. I am leading the charge to restore financial stability to the federal Job Corps program. Job Corps provides disadvantaged youth with the skills needed to obtain and hold a job, enter the Armed Forces, or enroll in advanced training or higher education. Despite the program's success, many vital training centers were forced to discontinue enrollment and lay off staff due to federal financial mismanagement. This severely disadvantaged the Loring and Penobscot Job Corps Centers. To help correct course, I successfully pushed to replace the federal official in charge of the program and helped to restore center enrollment. I have also introduced the bipartisan "Securing Job Corps Centers Act" to improve management at the federal level so the local centers can be free to focus on the young men and women they train.



Senator Collins visits Shaw & Tenney, a small business in Orono that crafts paddles and other wooden products.

More Efficient Workforce Training.

I support targeted funding for workforce education and training to ensure that Maine's workers have the skills they need to land good-paying jobs and advance professionally. To help workers get the training they need, the federal government must make more efficient and effective use of every dollar. The Department of Labor should identify ways that it can cut costs by working in conjunction with other government entities, such as the Department of Education, and the private sector. The Government Accountability Office found that 47 programs spent about \$18 billion on employment and training services. Congress should eliminate waste and duplication in federal workforce training programs to ensure more effective services.

HELPING MAINE EMPLOYERS SUCCEED

Repealing Obamacare’s Job-Killing “Employer Mandate.” The Employer Mandate imposes draconian fines on businesses with 50 or more “full-time” workers unless they provide “qualified” insurance coverage they may not be able to afford. These fines will discourage businesses from growing or adding jobs, particularly those close to that 50-job trigger. That is why I have cosponsored legislation to end the Employer Mandate and voted to repeal it. We should be providing incentives to help small businesses afford health insurance, not hitting them with fines.



Senator Collins meets with Allagash Brewing Company employees in Portland.

Supporting Maine’s Craft Breweries.

Maine has a robust and growing craft brewing industry, which employs more than 1,200 people. By reducing the amount of federal excise taxes small brewers pay on each barrel of beer they produce, my bipartisan bill will help these small businesses grow and thrive. One national study found that this proposal would increase economic activity by \$1 billion over five years, create 5,000 new jobs in the first year to 18 months after passage, and create approximately 400 new jobs annually thereafter.

Encouraging Small Business Investment.

I have a plan to help small businesses invest, grow, and add jobs. My bipartisan “Small Business Tax Certainty and Growth Act” would let small businesses immediately expense up to \$250,000 of the cost of certain equipment; allow restaurants to depreciate equipment over a more reasonable timeframe; permit companies to deduct half the cost of certain equipment and software in the year it is placed in service; double the tax deduction for start-up costs; and allow more companies to use the simpler cash method of accounting.

Protecting the 40-hour workweek.

Obamacare defines an employee working just 30 hours a week as “full time.” Because of the Employer Mandate, businesses with 50 or more “full-time” workers face a powerful incentive to cut their workers’ hours to fewer than 30 hours per week so they are not considered “full-time.” This will cause millions of workers to see their hours and earnings reduced. To protect these workers, I introduced the “Forty Hours is Full Time Act.” This bipartisan bill would change the definition of “full-time employee” in Obamacare to apply to people working 40 or more hours a week. A 40-hour workweek is full-time – it’s just common sense that the law reflect that.

Helping Employees Save for Retirement.

My “Retirement Security Act” is a bipartisan plan to help small businesses give their workers more ways to save for retirement. By allowing more small businesses to pool together, my plan would reduce the costs of providing retirement benefits. It would also allow employees to contribute more to their retirement plans and make it easier for low and middle income workers to claim existing tax benefits for retirement savings.

CUTTING RED TAPE



I share the concern of many Mainers that we have tied-up our job creators with red tape. With a slow recovery and unemployment still at unacceptably high levels, we must ensure that federal regulations do not impose an unnecessary burden on job creation. I have asked Maine employers what it would take to encourage them to add jobs. No matter their business or the size of their workforce, they tell me that Washington must stop imposing crushing new regulations.

Unfortunately, the problem is only getting worse. Right now, federal agencies are at work on approximately 2500 new rules, 229 of which affect small businesses, the engine of job creation. Nearly 140 of these rules have an economic impact of more than \$100 million each.

No business owner I know questions the legitimate role of limited government in protecting our health and safety. Too often, however, our small businesses are buried under a mountain of paperwork. Business owners are reluctant to create jobs today if they're going to need to pay more tomorrow to comply with onerous new regulations. That's why employers say that uncertainty generated by Washington is a big wet blanket on our economy.

I have authored legislation to require federal agencies to take into account the impact on small businesses and job growth *before* imposing new rules. For example, under existing law, only a few federal agencies are required to solicit and consider the views of small businesses before adopting new regulations. My plan would require more agencies to do so, giving small businesses an important tool against unfair and costly regulation.

My plan contains several other provisions to cut red tape:

- It requires federal agencies to analyze the indirect cost of regulations on the public, such as higher energy costs, higher prices, and the impact on job creation.
- It obligates federal agencies to comply with public notice and comment requirements, and prohibits them from circumventing these requirements by issuing unofficial rules as "guidance documents."
- It protects small businesses from needless fines and penalties the first time they fail to comply with paperwork requirements imposed by federal regulations, so long as no harm comes from that failure.

SUPPORTING MAINE TRANSPORTATION

As the most senior Republican on the Transportation Appropriations Subcommittee, one of my highest priorities is to strengthen our nation's transportation infrastructure. The safe and efficient flow of people and goods is critical to America's economy, to moving our products to market, our raw materials to factories, and our people to their homes, jobs, and recreation. It was my concern over the safety of forcing the heaviest trucks to travel on Maine's secondary roads and downtown streets that led me to author a new law allowing trucks weighing up to 100,000 pounds to travel on our Federal interstate highways in Maine. This law has made our secondary roads and downtown streets safer and saved Maine companies time and money.



Senator Collins attends the ribbon cutting of the Memorial Bridge.

Foundation for Future Growth. Improving the efficiency and reliability of the nation's transportation system is vital to the movement of freight and people, yet every state has a backlog of infrastructure needs. According to the Federal Highway Administration, nearly one-third of Maine's 2,400 bridges are deficient.

Through my role on the Appropriations Committee, I continue to work to provide robust federal investments in road, railway, transit, port, and harbor projects that promise to achieve critical national and regional objectives. I was pleased to

help secure \$20 million to replace the Memorial Bridge following its closing in 2011. More recently, I helped secure \$6 million for infrastructure investments at the Port of Eastport.

Ports and harbors are the economic lifeblood for many small or rural communities, and channel maintenance is critically important for safe transit. For this reason, I have worked to provide funding that is specifically targeted to meet the needs of small ports and harbors, like those in Maine. Recently, funding has been awarded for Portland Harbor, Wells Harbor, Scarborough River, and the Royal River.

INVESTING IN MAINE'S FUTURE

Maine's natural resources, from coastal waters to the woods, are powering the jobs of the future. Maine is home to many examples of the kind of hands-on research and development that is helping to drive domestic, clean energy technologies. Federal seed funding is helping to support an innovation economy – to meet our nation's energy challenges and create thriving industries and the jobs of the future right here in Maine.



The VoltturnUS launch

The Cobscook Bay Tidal Energy Project. Another exciting opportunity in marine renewable energy is tidal power. This project is the nation's first commercial, grid-connected tidal energy project and is the result of innovative research and development by a Maine company, with assistance from Sandia National Labs, the National Renewable Energy Laboratory, and a number of institutions of higher education throughout the United States, including UMaine.

Gulf of Maine – International Laboratory for Deepwater Offshore Wind Development.

Deepwater offshore wind technology is an emerging industry with the potential to create thousands of good jobs in Maine. I have worked to secure critical federal seed funding to leverage private investment in offshore wind technologies. Under UMaine's leadership, the VoltturnUS floating wind turbine launched off Maine is the first floating turbine of its kind in the world and the first grid-connected offshore wind turbine off the coast of the U.S. To continue the advancement of wind power, I support extending the Production and Investment Tax Credits and have introduced legislation with Senator Carper (D-DE) that would provide a new 30 percent tax credit on investments in offshore wind projects for the first 3,000 megawatts generated.

The Biomass Resource. I support protecting the vitality of our forest lands — and the industries they sustain — for generations to come. Biomass heating is an important home-grown heating source for Mainers. I succeeded in convincing HUD to update its regulations to ensure that federal housing and energy programs recognize wood pellet heating technology. I am also working with Senator Angus King on legislation to expand available tax credits to biomass heating technology. Moreover, advanced bio-fuels that are not derived from food crops, including innovative research at UMaine, have the potential to be affordable and viable petroleum alternatives.

To combat the challenges facing the pulp and paper and forest products industries — from the loss of working forests, to rising energy costs, to transportation, and unfair foreign competition — I have advocated for: workable improvements to the EPA's regulation of industrial boiler emissions; biomass to be treated as carbon-neutral; research aimed at creating markets for new wood products; and preserving Maine's working forests.

SUPPORTING MAINE MANUFACTURING



Senator Collins meets with BIW employees and Navy officials.

Bath Built is Best Built. I want America to be a leader in shipbuilding, not only because Bath Iron Works (BIW) creates manufacturing jobs in Maine, but also because strong, robust shipyards are vital national assets. The more than 5,000 skilled employees at BIW build world-class ships that provide the ability the U.S. Navy needs to protect global trade routes and project U.S. power wherever necessary. Through my role on the Defense Appropriations Subcommittee, I secured funding for an additional destroyer to be built at BIW. This is the final ship in a multiyear procurement that through efficiencies will save taxpayers more than \$1.5 billion – almost the equivalent of getting an additional destroyer for free.

I also led the effort to allow the Navy to settle a decades-old lawsuit and receive \$400 million worth of military hardware with no additional taxpayer investment. Of this, \$200 million will be spent in Maine for completion of the third DDG-1000 Ship built at BIW. This is a win for BIW employees, taxpayers, and our national security.

Ensuring Military Uniforms Are Made in America. We can create more American manufacturing jobs at no cost to the taxpayer simply by requiring the military to buy American-made athletic footwear for new recruits, just as it does for other uniform items for our troops. Not only is this a smart idea, there is a law requiring the Pentagon to give a preference to American-made clothing. In recent years, the Pentagon began skirting the intent of the law by giving recruits a voucher to purchase athletic footwear without any preference for shoes made in America. That is why I continually pressed the President and senior Department of Defense (DoD) officials to follow the law. Along with Senator Angus King, I also authored legislation to ensure that the Pentagon treats American-made athletic footwear just as it does American-made combat boots and service shoes. As a result, DoD will now require new recruits to use their athletic footwear allowance to purchase sneakers that are “Made in the U.S.A.” It is estimated that this decision could create hundreds of Maine jobs.

SUPPORTING MAINE'S AGRICULTURE COMMUNITY

As a native of Aroostook County, I know that family farms are the cornerstone of the economy in much of Maine. The increasing scope of the bounty produced in Maine is remarkable, from fresh fruits and vegetables, meats, fish, and dairy products to craft beer and wine, gourmet mustard, maple syrup, candies, and other treats. In addition to providing a safe and healthful food supply, Maine's farmers sustain our rural communities, protect the environment, and preserve the open space that is a vital part of our heritage. As a senior member of the Agriculture Appropriations Subcommittee, I have consistently supported potato and wild blueberry research and integrated pest management programs to help increase food safety and improve product quality. I have also secured funding for core agriculture and forestry research programs housed at UMaine.



Potatoes in Federal Nutrition Programs.

Mainers are proud of our potato industry, which remains a major economic contributor. Building on my success in retaining the potato's place in the federal school lunch program, I secured language in the FY 2015 Committee-passed Agriculture funding bill that will allow the fresh, white potato to be included in the Women, Infants and Children (WIC) program immediately upon enactment of the bill. Fresh potatoes are currently the *only* vegetable or fruit to be excluded, which sends a message to the public that the federal government believes fresh potatoes are not healthy despite all the evidence to the contrary. Moreover, this decision is not based on the most recent science.

Reforming Dairy Pricing. Dairy farmers in Maine and across the Northeast region have been under severe financial stress in recent years due to the wildly volatile and fluctuating price of milk, a situation caused by the nation's arcane and archaic pricing structure and exacerbated by escalating feed and energy prices. As a result, the very existence of many of our dairy farms is being threatened. I wrote language in the FY 2015 Committee-passed Agriculture funding bill that would require USDA to begin the hearing process to restructure the milk pricing system. This provision is based on legislation I co-authored with Senator Gillibrand (D-NY), the "Dairy Pricing Reform Act."